Social Progress

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Worship and Witness

A Source Book

- Meditations
- Scripture
- Theologia
- Litanies

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Social Progress

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From This Vantage Point...

FROM SANCTUARY TO FRONTIER

THIS issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS, entitled "Worship and Witness," is a compilation of selected resources expressing the relationship between the sanctuary of Christian devotion and the frontier of Christian action.

Included are a number of Scripture selections and meditations related to "special days" in the Church and civil calendars which have implications for Christian social action; quotable quotations, more or less extended, from a number of contemporary Christian theologians; four litanies on social themes; and a "piece" for verse choirs. We feel that these resources will be valued by ministers, social education and action secretaries of women's groups, and many other leaders. They are appropriate both for private meditation and for public services of worship.

"Worship and Witness" may be regarded as a companion piece to "Prayers of Concern" which was published as a "special" issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS in June, 1955. "Prayers of Concern" was a timely collection of contemporary prayers dealing with many aspects of the Church's social witness. It was well received and has been very widely used. Indeed, it has become one of the most popular issues of SOCIAL PROGRESS we have ever published.

The present new devotional resources affirm the constant need for undergirding social education and action with worship and prayer. We must constantly remind ourselves that we engage in Christian social action from a definite and profoundly Christian point of departure. We are in this business because this is what the gospel requires of us. Our orientation is not a vague and sentimental humanism, but a deeply disturbing understanding of the meaning of Christian love, of man's sinfulness, of God's purpose in the world, of the demands of justice and righteousness, of the worth of persons in the economy of God, and of the nature and mission of the Church.

It is important to understand the rhythm of worship and action in the Christian life. Each proceeds and each follows the other, and each is incomplete without the other.

The Sanctuary, where the Christian life is raised in worship as a sacrifice to the glory of God, and the Frontier, where that life is lived, most exasperatingly are two hemispheres of the same world in which the Christian lives. He moves rhythmically from one to the other, and in each God speaks in judgment and mercy.

—The SEA Staff

BIBLE

Readings for Special Days

Advent Sunday

The Magnificat

THERE is a striking difference between Mary's prophetic insight into the meaning of the event of the incarnation and our conventional observance f Christmas in America.

The heresy of commercialization should not trouble us overmuch—that the world's business, after all. What should concern us as churchmen the Church's sentimentality about Christmas.

While we mesmerize ourselves with pageantry—cute little angels forgetting their lines, Kings of Orient, tinsel stars, stable scenes, and shepherd noirs—the sonorous cadences of the Magnificat speak of the mighty power f God. "He has scattered the proud . . . filled the hungry . . . the rich he has ent empty away."

What did Mary know about the coming of Christ and the sickness of ociety that we have forgotten—or never known?

Ay soul magnifies the Lord,
nd my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
or he has regarded the low estate of his handmaiden.
or behold, henceforth all generations will call me blessed;
or he who is mighty has done great things for me,
nd holy is his name.
nd his mercy is on those who fear him
om generation to generation.
e has shown strength with his arm,
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts,
he has put down the mighty from their thrones,
and exalted those of low degree;
he has filled the hungry with good things,
and the rich he has sent empty away.
He has helped his servant Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
as he spoke to our fathers,
to Abraham and to his posterity for ever.

—*Luke 1: 46-56*

Human Rights Sunday

"Let Justice Roll Down Like Waters"

WE SOMETIMES sing our hymns so loudly that we cannot hear the cry of anguish in the streets. What a terrible indictment against the Church that is insensitive to social issues—"Take away from me the noise of your songs"!

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the work of the American Civil Liberties Union, the solemn decrees of the Supreme Court against racial discrimination, the labors of countless individuals and groups for freedom and justice—do these not raise paeans of praise and adoration to the God of love and mercy?

Until the Church can lead this mighty chorus, as it should, its prayers, songs, and impressive ceremonials are like dust storms over a dry and thirsty land. "Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."

They hate him who reproves in the gate,
and they abhor him who speaks the truth.
Therefore because you trample upon the poor
and take from him exactions of wheat,
you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not dwell in them;
you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink their wine.
For I know how many are your transgressions,
and how great are your sins—
you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe,
and turn aside the needy in the gate.
Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent in such a time;
for it is an evil time.
Seek good, and not evil,
that you may live;
and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you,
as you have said.
Hate evil, and love good,
and establish justice in the gate;
it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts,
will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
Therefore thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the Lord:
"In all the squares there shall be wailing;
and in all the streets they shall say, 'Alas! alas!'
They shall call the farmers to mourning
and to wailing those who are skilled in lamentation. . . .
"I hate, I despise your feasts,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and cereal offerings,
I will not accept them,
and the peace offerings of your fatted beasts
I will not look upon.
Take away from me the noise of your songs;

to the melody of your harps I will not listen.
ut let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."
—Amos 5: 10-16, 21-24

Church and Economic Life Week

With Wealth—a Solemn Warning

T HAS become almost too easy to talk about our "economy of abundance" in congratulatory tones. What is taken to be a sign of God's blessing may e a portent of his wrath. Remember the command to Isaiah: "Make the eart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest ıey . . . turn and be healed." Many times before he has made a fearful xample of a whole nation.

Who has gotten us this wealth and to what end? This is the winning ques-on, and already the time buzzer has sounded its ominous warning.

In the Biblical perspective there is a grave connection between wealth ıd covenantal obligation. Austerity is no Christian virtue, but it is a fearful ing to live in a rich suburb surrounded by slums.

All the commandment which I ɔmmand you this day you shall be ıreful to do, that you may live and ultiply. . . . And you shall remem-r all the way which the Lord your od has led you these forty years the wilderness, that he might hum-e you. . . .

Take heed lest you forget the Lord ur God, by not keeping his com-andments and his ordinances and s statutes, which I command you is day: lest, when you have eaten d are full, and have built goodly uses and live in them, and when ur herds and flocks multiply, and ur silver and gold is multiplied, d all that you have is multiplied, en your heart be lifted up, and u forget the Lord your God, who ought you out of the land of Egypt, t of the house of bondage, who l you through the great and terri-e wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water, who brought you water out of the flinty rock, who fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers did not know, that he might humble you and test you, to do you good in the end. Beware lest you say in your heart, "My power and the might of my hand have gotten me this wealth." You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth; that he may confirm his covenant which he swore to your fathers, as at this day. And if you forget the Lord your God and go after other gods and serve them and worship them, I solemnly warn you this day that you shall surely perish. Like the nations that the Lord makes to perish before you, so shall you perish, because you would not obey the voice of the Lord your God.
—Deut. 8: 1, 2, 11-20

Race Relations Sunday

Receive Him as a Brother

WHETHER Paul knew it or not, he struck the death blow to human slavery the day he dispatched his letter to Philemon. We are not so much our brother's keeper as we are his brother. Brothers love one another and such a love is not "over against" but "alongside." It does not keep—it shares.

After we emancipated our Negro brother we "kept" him—in his place, that is, the back door, the Jim Crow car, the segregated school, the menial job, the last row in the balcony, the church building abandoned downtown, the substandard dwellings across the tracks. And there—"in his place"—we brought little gifts of Christian love like baskets on Thanksgiving, a few white faces to his annual church supper, and some old hymnbooks.

He doesn't like "his place," and God is sending him back no longer a slave, nor a "kept" man, nor even a friend ("some of my best friends are . . .")—but a beloved brother.

I thank my God always when I remember you in my prayers, because I hear of your love and of the faith which you have toward the Lord Jesus and all the saints, and I pray that the sharing of your faith may promote the knowledge of all the good that is ours in Christ. For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.

Accordingly, though I am bold enough in Christ to command you to do what is required, yet for love's sake I prefer to appeal to you—I, Paul, an ambassador and now a prisoner also for Christ Jesus—I appeal to you for my child, Onesimus, whose father I have become in my imprisonment. (Formerly he was useless to you, but now he is indeed useful to you and to me.) I am sending him back to you, sending my very heart. I would have been glad to keep him with me, in order that he might serve me on your behalf during my imprisonment for the gospel; but I preferred to do nothing without your consent in order that your goodness might not be by compulsion but of your own free will.

Perhaps this is why he was parted from you for a while, that you might have him back for ever, no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother, especially to me but how much more to you, both in the flesh and in the Lord. So if you consider me your partner, receive him as you would receive me. If he has wronged you at all, or owes you anything, charge that to my account. I, Paul, write this with my own hand, I will repay it—to say nothing of your owing me even your own self. Yes, brother, I want some benefit from you in the Lord. Refresh my heart in Christ.

—Philemon 4-20

Easter

All Things Are Under His Feet

ALL things holy, or "unholy" things as well? Jobs—or the world of unions and management; homes—or the world of real estate and city planning; chools—or the world of education and culture; ballots—or the world of olitics and government; machines—or the world of science and industry? re these things also "under his feet"?

In his resurrection Christ triumphed over all things that they might be econciled to God from whom they had been so long estranged.

The world, bifurcated into "the sacred" and the "the secular," does not ften hear of this raising of Jesus above it, and misguided piety makes the rror and the ignorance persist. *All things* stand in the shadow of his cross nd all things, however unknowing, share the reflected glory of his resurrec-ion: Jesus Christ is Lord!

But in fact Christ has been raised rom the dead, the first fruits of those ho have fallen asleep. For as by a an came death, by a man has come lso the resurrection of the dead. For s in Adam all die, so also in Christ hall all be made alive. But each in is own order: Christ the first fruits, hen at his coming those who belong Christ. Then comes the end, when e delivers the kingdom to God the ather after destroying every rule nd every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. "For God has put all things in subjection under his feet." But when it says, "All things are put in subjection under him," it is plain that he is excepted who put all things under him. When all things are subjected to him, then the Son himself will also be subjected to him . . . that God may be everything to every one.

—I Cor. 15: 20-28

National Family Week

Families of the Promise by Faith

OUR families are in the train of Abraham and are the recipients of God's promise to him.

What have our families brought to God that keeps the law and makes e promise to Abraham unnecessary? We have nothing to bring but our ith, and even this faith is not of ourselves, but by the grace of God.

The anxious possession and overprotection of children and women, the ntimentality of conjugal love "curved in upon itself," the inhibition of merican middle-class moralism, the self-sufficient family circle—these are

the fetters of a family that knows nothing of the promise of freedom and grace through Jesus Christ.

Families of the Promise are not only blessed but a blessing to the community in their openness and nonconformity. They know that in Christ the whole world is one family, not under the law but under grace. Good fences do not necessarily make good neighbors.

Thus Abraham "believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness." So you see that it is men of faith who are the sons of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In thee shall all the nations be blessed." So then, those who are men of faith are blessed with Abraham. . . .

Now before faith came, we were confined under the law, kept under restraint until faith should be revealed. So that the law was our custodian until Christ came, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a custodian; for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

—Gal. 3: 6-9; 23-29

Rural Life Sunday

"Let the Earth Bring Forth"

MUCH is said these days about man's control of nature. He has access to limitless sources of power and energy in nuclear science. By mastery of chemistry and the nitrogen cycle he can make fertile fields produce still bigger yields per acre. He now possesses the technical skill to feed and clothe the peoples of the earth abundantly.

Modern man's dominion over the earth and its living creatures carries with it enormous responsibilities, which we have only begun to grasp. We know now, for example, how to produce rainfall by seeding the clouds with chemical ice. But the clouds that yield their rain to save the crops in one area will have no life-giving moisture for others. Indeed, by this practice a general drought may be worsened. In the majesty of the Genesis story we see the orderliness and rhythm of God's creation. Men may ignore or defy this balance only at their peril.

And God said, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the earth according to their kinds." And it was so. And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kinds and the cattle according to their kinds, and

verything that creeps upon the round according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let us make man n our image, after our likeness; and et them have dominion over the fish f the sea, and over the birds of the ir, and over the cattle, and over all he earth. . . ."

So God created man in his own mage, in the image of God he reated him; male and female he reated them. And God blessed them, nd God said to them, "Be fruitful nd multiply, and fill the earth and ubdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.

—Gen. 1: 24-31

Independence Day

Therefore, We Will Serve the Lord

KARL BARTH, the Swiss theologian reminds us that the State is not a result of man's sin and finitude but an instrument of God's grace, patience, and providence. The civil government with its provisional powers to order and protect our common life must be of constant concern to the Church. The people of this day who choose "to serve the Lord" are jointly responsible with others in our society for the establishment and preservation of the civil community. Faithfulness to God requires that members of the Christian community participate steadfastly and intelligently in the life of the State and in the shaping of its institutions.

" 'Your fathers lived of old beyond he Euphrates, . . . and they served ther gods. Then I took your father lbraham from beyond the River and d him through all the land of anaan, and made his offspring nany. I gave him Isaac; and to Isaac gave Jacob and Esau. And I gave sau the hill country of Seir to ossess, but Jacob and his children ent down to Egypt. And I sent loses and Aaron, and I plagued gypt with what I did in the midst of ; and afterwards I brought you out. Then I brought your fathers out of Egypt, and you came to the sea; and the Egyptians pursued your fathers with chariots and horsemen. . . .'

"Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods which your fathers served beyond the River, and in Egypt, and serve the Lord. And if you be unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your fathers served in the region beyond the River, or the gods of the Amorites

in whose land you dwell; but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

Then the people answered, "Far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; for it is the Lord our God who brought us and our fathers up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage, and who did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land; therefore we also will serve the Lord, for he is our God."

—Josh. 24: 1-6, 14-18

Labor Day Sunday

Make No Distinctions Among You

ONE of the most painful (to most of us) facts about the Bible is that it manifests in not a few passages a rather obvious "bias" against the rich, the privileged, and the comfortable. And relatively few of us are poor, underprivileged, and uncomfortable. To be sure, it has no judgment to bear against wealth as such (as many modern preachers are quick to point out), but it carries strong implications about the almost irresistible temptations that are created when wealth and human nature are brought together in a permanent combination. James's warning about "showing partiality," and his later stricture against "the rich" are suggestive of creative (if potentially dangerous) homiletical treatment. Isaiah, Amos, Micah, Luke, and others also had some painful things to say on the same subject. The problem of the contemporary preacher is to help modern, comfortable Christians to understand why they are able to read these things in the Bible without catching their breath, and tend to be *unable* to hear them expounded from the pulpit without losing their temper.

My brethren, show no partiality as you hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory. For if a man with gold rings and in fine clothing comes into your assembly, and a poor man in shabby clothing also comes in, and you pay attention to the one who wears the fine clothing and say, "Have a seat here, please," while you say to the poor man, "Stand there," or, "Sit at my feet," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts? Listen, my beloved brethren. Has not God chosen those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which he has promised to those who love him? But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you, is it not they who drag you into court? Is it not they who blaspheme that honorable name by which you are called?

If you really fulfil the royal law, according to the scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you do well.—James 2: 1-8

World-wide Communion

One—that the World Might Believe

JESUS in this Johannine discourse gives implicit recognition to one of the important factors that make the hearing and heeding of the gospel possible to those who are "outside"—and, conversely by implication, he recognizes that men are prevented from hearing and heeding the gospel by factors that have nothing to do with the validity of its verbal proclamation. The oneness of those who believe, or their lack of oneness, either helps or hinders the effectualness of the preaching of the Word: "[I pray] also for those who are to believe in me . . . that they may all be one . . . *so that the world may believe*" (John 17: 20, 21). Whether the world believes or not, i.e., whether the proclamation of the gospel is worth the trouble or not, depends in large measure upon whether the Church (those who already believe) manifests in its own life the fact that man-made barriers of class and race have been dissolved.

When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify thy Son that the Son may glorify thee, since thou hast given him power over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom thou hast given him. . . .

"I have manifested thy name to the men whom thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them to me, and they have kept thy word. Now they know that everything that thou hast given me is from thee; for I have given them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me. I am praying for them; I am not praying for the world but for those whom thou hast given me, for they are thine; all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.

"I do not pray for these only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they may all be one; even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me. Father, I desire that they also, whom thou hast given me, may be with me where I am, to behold my glory which thou hast given me in thy love for me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world has not known thee, but I have known thee; and these know that thou hast sent me. I made known to them thy name, and I will make it known, that the love with which thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."—John 17: 1, 2, 6-10, 20-26

World Order Sunday

And Peoples Shall Flow to Zion

JESUS' commandment, "You . . . must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," keeps the Christian constantly under the creative tension of an "impossible possibility," providing a sense of direction for all his striving and at the same time preventing him from ever being satisfied with his own righteousness. So also Micah's vision of a world of peace and justice under the law of God, with the nations "not learning war any more" provides the creative tension for the never-ending struggle to achieve peace in our world. It labels the best achievement of American foreign policy and the most fruitful efforts of the United Nations as provisional and relative accomplishments toward the goal. It makes boasting impossible in view of the continuing conflict of interest among the nations and the ever-present danger of war. It also enables us to distinguish between those accomplishments that serve only our own political self-interest and those that really move us in the direction of the vision. Who, in the light of Micah's words, can disparage any honest and realistic effort to lessen the possibility of war? The victory ultimately belongs to Him, but as he works, so must we work also.

It shall come to pass in the latter days
that the mountain of the house of the Lord
shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
and shall be raised up above the hills;
and peoples shall flow to it,
and many nations shall come, and say:
"Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord,
to the house of the God of Jacob;
that he may teach us his ways
and we may walk in his paths." . . .
He shall judge between many peoples,
and shall decide for strong nations afar off;
and they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree,
and none shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken.
For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god,
but we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever.
In that day, says the Lord, I will assemble the lame
and gather those who have been driven away,
and those whom I have afflicted;
and the lame I will make the remnant;
and those who were cast off, a strong nation.

—*Micah 4: 1-7*

Thanksgiving Sunday

"Give Thanks to the Lord"

MANY American Christians find it difficult, if not impossible, to "give thanks to the Lord *with my whole heart.*" The intellectual effort and the verbal acknowledgment of thanks are relatively easy to achieve, but putting the "whole heart" into it is another matter. Who today is able sincerely and with joy to "thank God for all his blessings"? It is not quite accurate to say that the Israelites were "able" to do this. It was rather impossible for them *not* to, because their history was one of repeated deliverance from very real terror, disaster, and destruction. They saw the judgment of God time and again descend like lightning toward their heads, only, on occasion, to stop one inch above them. On other occasions it struck, they were shattered, and then healed again by the power and mercy of God. This happens to us also today, but the judgment and mercy of God moving in the daily events here and abroad need to be pointed out by the discerning preacher, that we may truly know the "holiness and terribleness" of his name and the wonder of his redemption. Then again thanksgiving might become "wholehearted."

Praise the Lord.
I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart. . . .
Great are the works of the Lord,
studied by all who have pleasure in them. . . .
He has caused his wonderful works, to be remembered;
the Lord is gracious and merciful.
He provides food for those who fear him;
he is ever mindful of his covenant.
He has shown his people the power of his works,
in giving them the heritage of the nations.
The works of his hands are faithful and just;
all his precepts are trustworthy,
they are established for ever and ever,
to be performed with faithfulness and uprightness.
He sent redemption to his people;
he has commanded his covenant for ever.
Holy and terrible is his name!
The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom;
a good understanding have all those who practice it.
His praise endures for ever!
—*Ps. 111*

THE VOICES AND THE VOICE

Speaketh Hate

I am the voice of Hate—
I am the clamor of war, the heat of anger,
the persistence of prejudice.
I build mighty weapons
and threaten the world with my dark power;
I crush the weak and helpless,
I tear my enemies asunder,
I tread upon those different from myself.
I built the world of yesterday
and will control the world of tomorrow—
Come unto me, you awakening masses,
and I will give you power!

Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts.
I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but by me.
I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Speaketh Fear

I am the voice of Fear—
I am the great sustainer
of Things as They Are.
I am the force that blinds,
the power that paralyzes.
I cripple reforms—
agonize in indecision—
foster despair.
I isolate men from each other in the rigid boundaries
of class and race.
I have nourished the hearts of men
through all time.
Come unto me, you awakening masses,
and I will lull you to sleep again.

Many church groups have been experimenting with modern secular drama and poetry which express the spiritual problems of our time. This piece is well suited for verse-speaking choirs and may be effectively staged in the sanctuary

God did not give us a spirit of timidity but a spirit of power and love and self-control.
God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him. . . . There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

peaketh Greed

I am the voice of Greed—
To him who has, I give more,
and to him who has not, I take away even the little he has.
I fill my stomach and throw away what is left.
I do not share.
I fill my mind with knowledge
and use it for my own advantage.
I exploit the world for my satisfaction,
and do not teach, strengthen, or uplift.
Come unto me, you awakening masses.
I will fill your stomachs and your minds and your spirits,
and we will take the place of your oppressors.

I am the bread of life; he who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst.
He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.
As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

peaketh Pride

I am the voice of Pride—
I appeal to the selfishness of men's hearts.
I promote jealousy and envy in individuals
and in nations.
I make gods of men.
I am ruthless,
passionate,
dishonest,
lustful.

I gorge myself on ignorance and superstition.
Come unto me, you awakening masses,
and I will give you the vanity of fame.

Whoever would save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there will be disorder and every vile practice.
If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

The Awakening People Speak

I am the voice of the illiterate,
the oppressed,
the hungry,
the dying.
I am eagerly questioning,
persistently demanding,
pathetically clinging.
I am riotous, tempestuous.
I am silent, listening.
I am a whisper in despair,
a cry in oppression,
a shout in awakening.
I am hoping, groping,
dreaming, scheming.

I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life.
Come to me, all who labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me.
He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.

The People Speak Again

I have heard the voices and the Voice
And I must choose between them.
Who will bear me witness?
Who will my counselor be?

—Dorothy Polhemus Radcliffe, West Side Presbyterian Church, Lawrence, Kansas

Quotes from THEOLOGIANS

What is the nature of the Church? What is the nature of society? How all the Church speak and act redemptively for God in the world? These are uestions to which an ever-increasing amount of attention is being given by e leading theologians of our time. They are also questions that, in different ntexts with different terminology, trouble the most thoughtful Christians day.

The fact that we and the Church exist in a *new* kind of society ("de-rsonalized," "technological," "power-structured," "interdependent," and so rth) means that, for many thoughtful Christians, the practical implications the doctrines of grace, forgiveness, love, justice, as well as the practical pressions of evangelism, prophecy, preaching, Bible study, are no longer parent. For example, what does "forgiveness" mean for a labor union d a corporation locked in a bitter dispute over grievance procedures? Or vitness" (the Greek word was *martyreo*, from which comes our word "mar-r"), for a congregation that is under no obvious pressure or attack from the vil order, but is in fact quite comfortable in it?

That theologians regard these questions as probing beyond the present ontiers of Christian certainty, and are willing to risk the charge of heresy r worse) to speak of their implications is a cause for rejoicing in the Church. hat many of them see these questions as implying a politically, economically, d socially oriented interpretation of the Christian faith should come as no rprise.

Herewith a few selections from some of the contemporary theologians, meant be suggestive and provocative only, not definitive in any sense.

THE DEMONIC INFLUENCE OF MEANS

We have seen how the aim sought for has become implicit d abstract. Then, it has ceased to ve. We still hold the ideas of "hap-ness" or of "liberty" of a hundred ars ago, although in a debased and akened form. Now the develop-nt of means makes these ends ab-rd; for the means have destroyed very possibility of reckoning with habitual ends. But people do not even realize that the means which are now being employed involve the negation of implicit ends. So they congratulate themselves every time a speed record has been achieved by an airplane, and people work very hard to try to go still faster, as if speed were a valid and sufficient aim in itself. But what is the use of gaining time like this?

Every time that a new remedy is discovered everybody is delighted, and people work harder than ever to extend the work of healing. But what is the use of the life which we take so much pains to conserve? What is the use of time? What is the value of life, since it is precisely by the use of these means in our civilization that time and life no longer have any meaning, that man really does not know what to do with his time, and that life is more absurd than ever, because the spiritual foundations of time and of life have been destroyed in the heart of man? Modern man having been dehumanized by means, having himself become a means—in spite of the fact that "time" has been gained, and new methods of preserving human life have been discovered—is like a savage who has been given a very delicate and perfect machine which he does not know how to use....

All that science can do will be used to save one life, and then millions of men are massacred by bombs, or in concentration camps: both are products of the enormity of our means. Similar examples abound on all sides. For instance, take the question of social security: with great ability a huge administrative machine has been established in order to ensure social security for mankind—but why? For what purpose? For no time has been more uncertain than our own, and what is this miserable "security" which is offered to men? Some millions of francs! at the cost of the insecurity due to financial, social, and economic crises, of wars and of revolutions, which, owing to our technical means, actually affect the lives of all: men, women, and children. In this terrible dance of means which have been unleashed, no one knows where we are going, the aim of life has been forgotten, the end has been left behind. Man has set out at tremendous speed—to go *nowhere.*—From *The Presence of the Kingdom,* by Jacques Ellul. Published by The Westminster Press, Philadelphia. Used by permission.

SIN AND JUSTIFICATION IN THE ECONOMIC ORDER

THE sinfulness of the economic order—speaking generally—consists in its alienation from its Divine purpose, inherent in the order itself; on the one hand, it has been spoilt by its false tendency to become an end in itself, and on the other by egoistic exploitation by the individual which always works out both as sin and as a curse. This is not merely the character of the economic activity of the individual—for if this were so there might possibly be some activity of a different character—but it is the economic order as such, the order into which each one of us is born. It is not possible for the individual to engage in economic activity without sin. Nowhere does the truth of the doctrine of Original Sin, and the untruth of the individualism of liberty, become so palpably eviden

as in this sphere. Each of us has an active and a passive share in the universal sinfulness of the economic order.

But in spite of this fact the purpose of God for the economic order is not altered. Even within the sinful economic order—and there never has been, and never will be any other—and by its means and by it alone, God gives us life, and what is necessary for life. So far as our life is preserved, it is preserved by this order. Therefore the summons to take an active part in it by our labor is not canceled by the sinful corruption of the economic order. It is both necessary and possible to serve God and our neighbor even in these orders which, in themselves, are perverted orders of creation. In spite of the fact that all human "callings" are stamped more or less plainly with the curse of evil—for once we see each "calling" in its concrete historical reality, we see that there are really *no* exceptions to this rule—it is both necessary and possible to fulfill a "calling" of this kind in the spirit of faith, and—in the spirit of faith—to perform the "duties of our state" as the work which God has given us to do.

—From *The Divine Imperative*, by Emil Brunner. Copyright, 1947, by W. L. Jenkins. The Westminster Press. Used by permission.

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

We have established that in the relationship between Church and world, which both stand under the sovereign Lordship of Christ, justice is done to the difference between both while at the same time no dualism is taught. I here recall the figure of the large circular surface, which . . . represents the Kingdom of Christ as a whole, with Christ the Lord as center and with the smaller concentric circle representing the Church. Christ rules over the Church, and he rules over the entire world. The Church stands nearer to him, for it is his Body. The State also belongs to the same "order," to his Lordship, but it stands at a greater distance from him, since its members do not know of the Lordship of Christ. This duality reminds us of the fact that the Kingdom of Christ, when we speak in respect of *time*, is not yet the Kingdom of God, which only at the end, when Christ shall have subjected all things to God, will succeed the Kingdom of Christ. Only in the Kingdom of God will there no longer be two realms, for there God will be "all in all" (I Cor. 15: 28).

Because the Church knows about this entire situation, it has to subordinate itself to the State, even the pagan State, that remains within its limits. But nevertheless it must regard that State as something provisional. . . .

Fundamentally, therefore, nothing exists that stands outside of the redemptive history of Christ. There is in the New Testament no dualism be-

tween a realm where God is Lord and a realm in which Christ is Lord. The pagan State does not know that it belongs to the Kingdom of Christ. Nevertheless, according to the New Testament, it can discern its task. When the question, which is not put in the New Testament, as to how this is really possible comes up for solution, the answer can be found only in the framework of the New Testament outlook we have presented; it cannot be found, if we are to give the answer upon the basis of the New Testament, in the framework of a theory of natural law. The New Testament itself, in any event, knows only that the State also stands within the redemptive history. This is shown on the one side in the fact that in the divine order it knows how to distinguish between good and evil (Rom. 13:3 ff.), but also in the fact that Pilate has Christ crucified and yet even so becomes the unconscious instrument of the redemptive history. —From *Christ and Time*, by Oscar Cullmann. Copyright, 1950, by W. L. Jenkins. The Westminster Press. Used by permission.

THE ECONOMICS OF MORTALITY

All that a man would do must be done in limited time. He wants a decent house with all "the modern conveniences," a job which is lucrative without being too wearing, security in the possession and use of his property, and his enjoyment of wife, friends, and children. Now, it is of decisive importance that he does not have an indefinite amount of time in which to acquire these "blessings of life." He does not care to have a good job after he is sixty. He does not want to live in a tenement house until he is fifty. He must get married before it is too late. He must acquire all he wants in good time because after a while he will not be able to do justice to the good things of life, and heaven knows when he will be cut off from life and from everything. The sooner he comes to possess the means of happiness, the longer he will be happy. There is just so much time. The more goods one has for a longer time, the more happiness one will achieve. Men's actual zeal in the pursuit of goods is a function of their finitude. . . .

The limited nature of our time invests our existence with a peculiar quality. "Now or never" generates an impetuosity out of proportion to any good in view. Every good pretends to be an absolute. Neither the desire for possessions nor the enjoyment of them corresponds to how much good they are in relation to other goods. The amount of good in goods cannot be determined with any objective measure. The force of a man's grip upon his wallet does not correspond to the measure of its contents. . . .

Today, there are indefinite possibilities of power, possession, and enjoyment; and there is a definite limit to the time in which a man must acquire and enjoy. In our day, the

goods a man might accumulate are virtually infinite, but the time in which he might accumulate them is finite. Finite men are potentially infinite in the world of machines. Being remains circumscribed according to nature, but having has burst the bonds and is racing toward infinity. Men who carry the mark of death are confronted with opportunity for infinite having. If they were immortal, they would go on and on, accumulating to their heart's content, without haste and without waste. Maybe they would not accumulate at all. But being mortal, they must accumulate all they can while they can. Hence, they accumulate the finite with a zeal generated by the infinite. The passion generated by the ideal infinite enters into their accumulation of the finite and turns their whole existence into nonsense. . . .

The new infinite is made up of an infinite fragmentation of the old eternal. The invisible dome of the eternal is fallen down and shattered into an infinity of colorful pieces, and the people are turned into a race of junkmen. There they are, the fragments, in an infinite variety of sizes, shapes, and colors, hiding the heavens and the sun. See the men rushing about, filling their bags with the stuff and running home in order to hoard it. "See how many there are," say the men with the wild eyes and the hooked fingers, "piles and piles of the thing. There never were so many things before. We will find more and more as we go along. We shall be busy picking up and enjoying all our days. We shall make new things out of them, and those who come after us will carry on where we leave off. Now we have something exciting and useful to do. We have something to look forward to; something we can call our own and enjoy. Some day there will be more, enough for everybody. We shall all be rich. There shall be peace, and we shall be happy at last; not we, of course, but those who come after us. Today we must pick up and if necessary fight for the pickings. But some day the fighting shall be over, and there shall only be picking and filling the bag." Drink, gentlemen, to the Timeless Pluriverse of Infinite Picking! . . .

Truly, a marvelous thing has happened. Even the lovers of mankind no longer care about men and women. Heaven knows, everybody is humanitarian. Everybody is working for peace and prosperity. Statesmen, preachers, professors, capitalists, Communists, socialists; farmers, workers, industrialists; idealists, realists, and pragmatists: they all are working for the benefit of mankind, not only for the present but also for a prolonged and dim future. They all seek freedom and justice for all men. They are working hard toward the elimination of pain and drudgery and toward the greatest pleasure of the greatest number. But, their indiscriminate concern for persons and things, their willingness to sacrifice people for the sake of abstractions, their strange failures to accomplish the good they propose, the surprising ways in which they seek peace but multiply trouble—these things more than indicate that they themselves are the victims of the fragmentation of man which is playing havoc with the peoples of our time. Hence they continue to fail, and our latter end

is worse than the former. The repudiation of personal existence and the miseries of men go together, and it is absurd to expect a blessed life while we nullify the human being who is the only possible bearer of it. —From *Lust for Power*, by Joseph Haroutunian. Copyright, 1949, by Charles Scribner's Sons, and reprinted by their permission.

THE POLITICAL ASPECTS OF GRACE

THE Christian community is particularly conscious of the need for the existence of the civil community. For it knows that all men (non-Christians as well as Christians) need to have "kings," that is, need to be subject to an external, relative, and provisional order of law, defended by superior authority and force. It knows that the original and final pattern of this order is the eternal Kingdom of God and the eternal righteousness of his grace. It preaches the Kingdom of God in this eternal form. But it also thanks God that his Kingdom has an external, relative, and provisional embodiment "in the world that is not yet redeemed," in which it is valid and effective even when the temporal order is based on the most imperfect and clouded knowledge of Jesus Christ or on no such knowledge at all. This external, relative, and provisional, but not on that account invalid or ineffective, form of legal order is the civil community. The Christian community is aware of the need for the civil community, and it alone takes the need absolutely seriously. For—because it knows of the Kingdom and grace of God—it knows of man's presumption and the plainly destructive consequences of man's presumption. It knows how dangerous man is and how endangered by himself. It knows him as a sinner, that is, as a being who is always on the point of opening the sluices through which, if he were not checked in time, chaos and nothingness would break in and bring human time to an end. It can only conceive the time that is still left to it as a "time of grace" in the twofold sense of being the time which it is given in order to know and lay hold of God's grace—and as the time which it is given for this very purpose by the grace of God. The Christian community itself exists in this time which is given to man, that is, in the space where man's temporal life is still protected from chaos—and on the face of it chaos should have broken in long ago. . . .

Knowing that, it recognizes in the existence of the civil community—disregarding the Christianity or lack of Christianity of its members and officials and also disregarding the particular forms which it assumes—no less than in its own existence the operation of a divine ordinance (*ordinatio*, i.e., institution or foundation), an *exousia* which is and acts in accordance with the will of God (Rom. 13:1b). However much human error and human tyr-

anny may be involved in it, the State is not a product of sin but one of the constants of the divine Providence and government of the world in its action against human sin: it is therefore an instrument of divine grace. The civil community shares both a common origin and a common center with the Christian community. It is an order of divine grace inasmuch as in relation to sinful man as such, in relation to the world that still needs redeeming, the grace of God is always the patience of God. It is the sign that mankind, in its total ignorance and darkness, which is still, or has again become, a prey to sin and therefore subject to the wrath of God, is yet not forsaken but preserved and sustained by God. It serves to protect man from the invasion of chaos and therefore to give him time: time for the preaching of the gospel; time for repentance; time for faith. . . .

In what concrete attitudes to particular political patterns and realities this Christian acknowledgment will be expressed can remain a completely open question. It makes one thing quite impossible, however: a Christian decision to be indifferent; a nonpolitical Christianity. The Church can in no case be indifferent or neutral toward this manifestation of an order so clearly related to its own mission.

—From *Against the Stream*, by Karl Barth. Philosophical Library, Inc., 1954. Used by permission.

WHAT IS THE WILL OF GOD?

WHOEVER wishes to take up the problem of a Christian ethic must be confronted at once with a demand which is quite without parallel. He must from the outset discard as irrelevant the two questions which alone impel him to concern himself with the problem of ethics, "How can I be good?" and "How can I do good?", and instead of these he must ask the utterly and totally different question, "What is the will of God?" This requirement is so immensely far-reaching because it presupposes a decision with regard to the ultimate reality; it presupposes a decision of faith. If the ethical problem presents itself essentially in the form of inquiries about one's own being good and doing good, this means that it has already been decided that it is the self and the world which are the ultimate reality. The aim of all ethical reflection is, then, that I myself shall be good and that the world shall become good through my action. But the problem of ethics at once assumes a new aspect if it becomes apparent that these realities, myself and the world, themselves lie embedded in a quite different ultimate reality, namely, the reality of God, the Creator, Reconciler, and Redeemer. What is of ultimate importance is now no longer that I should become good, or that the condition of the world should be made better by my action, but that the reality of God should show itself

everywhere to be the ultimate reality. Where there is faith in God as the ultimate reality, all concern with ethics will have as its starting point that God shows himself to be good, even if this involves the risk that I myself and the world are not good but thoroughly bad. All things appear distorted if they are not seen and recognized in God. All so-called data, all laws and standards, are mere abstractions so long as there is no belief in God as the ultimate reality. But when we say that God is the ultimate reality, this is not an idea, through which the world as we have it is to be sublimated. It is not the religious rounding-off of a profane conception of the universe. It is the acceptance in faith of God's showing forth of himself, the acceptance of his revelation. . . .

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 5: 10). This does not refer to the righteousness of God; it does not refer to persecution for Jesus Christ's sake. It is the beatification of those who are persecuted for the sake of a just cause, and, as we may now add, for the sake of a true, good, and human cause (cf. I Peter 3: 14; 2:20). This beatitude puts those Christians entirely in the wrong who, in their mistaken anxiety to act rightly, seek to avoid any suffering for the sake of a just, good, and true cause, because, as they maintain, they could with a clear conscience suffer only for an explicit profession of faith in Christ; it rebukes them for their ungenerousness and narrowness which looks with suspicion on all suffering for a just cause and keeps its distance from it. Jesus gives his support to those who suffer for the sake of a just cause, even if this cause is not precisely the confession of his name; he takes them under his protection, he accepts responsibility for them, and he lays claim to them. And so the man who is persecuted for the sake of a just cause is led to Christ, so that it happens that in the hour of suffering and of responsibility, perhaps for the first time in his life and in a way which is strange and surprising to him but is nevertheless an inner necessity, such a man appeals to Christ and professes himself a Christian because at this moment, for the first time, he becomes aware that he belongs to Christ. This, too, is not an abstract deduction, but it is an experience which we ourselves have undergone, an experience in which the power of Jesus Christ became manifest in fields of life where it had previously remained unknown.

—From *Ethics*, by Dietrich Bonhoeffer. The Macmillan Company, 1955. Used by permission.

LITANIES

FOR JUSTICE AND GOOD HUMAN RELATIONS

This antiphonal prayer may be used on special days when brotherhood is emphasized or in any corporate act of worship in which the congregation lays before God its sins, hopes, and aspirations.

Minister—Almighty God, who hast created all men in thy own image; and receivest with joy the worship of all nations, classes, and races of men:
***People*—We praise thee, our God and Creator.**

Minister—O thou who dost rule and judge with equity and justice the contending wills of thy rebellious creatures:
***People*—We praise thee, our God and our Judge.**

Minister—O thou whose grace and mercy save without distinction all who come to thee in Jesus Christ:
***People*—We praise thee, our God and Redeemer.**

Minister—We come to thee acknowledging our oneness in creation, in sin, and in hope, with those whom men call different from us:
***People*—Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

Minister—We come to thee rejoicing in our uniqueness as persons in one human family—living and loving, seeking and striving, fearing and hoping—each in his own way:
***People*—Hear us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

Minister—For our demanding of others what we are unwilling to do ourselves, for our easy professions of love unmatched by difficult acts of justice, for our pretensions of understanding in the midst of our ignorance:
***People*—Forgive us and help us, O Lord.**

Minister—For our disclaimers of prejudice in ourselves and our enjoyment of the fruits of prejudice in others, for our refusal to lead the way until others first reform, for our pious benevolence that leaves the structures of injustice unchanged:
***People*—Forgive us and help us, O Lord.**

Minister—For the sense of superiority disguised by acts of charity, for the preference for peace instead of struggle for equity, for the abundance of words when talk is easy and the abundance of silence when witness is costly:
***People*—Forgive us and help us, O Lord.**

Minister—For the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and for all who work for racial justice; for their victories, by thy Spirit, in church and court and school:

***People*—We praise thee and thank thee, our Heavenly Father.**

Minister—For the shaking of our own complacency; for thy love that will not let us go; for our hope in Jesus Christ:

***People*—We praise thee and thank thee, our Heavenly Father.**

Minister and People—Eternal God and Father of us all, hasten the day when we and all men, differing in color, creed, and clan, shall recognize our common origin, need, and destiny in thee, and dwell together in brotherhood with justice in the earth. Bless thou every effort, and forgive the failures, to move toward this goal; and, beginning with us, who need and claim thy mercy in Jesus Christ, replace words with deeds and sentiments with sacrifice, for we pray in the name of the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR FAITHFULNESS IN POLITICAL LIFE

The following sentences may be used during a political campaign or at any time when the Church and Christians seek God's help as they face their responsibility for our common life.

Minister—Eternal God, who hast determined our allotted periods and established the bounds of our habitation; who hast set us in family and nation, and appointed unto us governors, statesmen, and politicians:

***People*—Receive thou our thanks, O Lord.**

Minister—For the maintenance of peace and order; for the proscription of evil by the just authority of the state:

***People*—We thank thee for thy great mercy.**

Minister—For government by consent of the people, and all free elections; for public services of health, education, and welfare; for the common care of the mentally ill, the instruction of children and youth, the aid to youth, the aid to widows and orphans:

***People*—We thank thee for thy great mercy.**

Minister—For political parties and the orderly processes of political choice; for all candidates to public office, for the electorate they are bound to represent in the formulation of policy for the welfare of all thy people:

***People*—We thank thee for thy great mercy.**

Minister—With shame we confess that we have accepted the fruits of freedom and order, without taking responsibility for the same; that we have been too lazy to keep informed, too busy to take part, too satisfied to initiate:

***People*—Forgive us and help us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

Minister—We have kept silent till our interests were threatened, our preju-

lices challenged, our complacency disturbed; and then we have com-
plained; we have deferred to demagogues, and when they betrayed us,
have reproached without repenting:
ople—**Forgive us and help us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

nister—By our own blindness and apathy we have brought the vocation
of politics into disfavor; by demanding of our leaders sacrifice and virtue
we are not willing to give, we have forced them into compromise, and
called them dishonest; by trusting pious words and good intentions, while
eschewing hard work and careful study, we have made our faith irrelevant:
ople—**Forgive us and help us, we beseech thee, O Lord.**

nister—That thy Holy Spirit may convict us of our sin, and bring from
us fruits of repentance:
ople—**Hear thou our prayer, our Father.**

nister—That thy Church may receive power and wisdom to translate love
nto justice; that it may face corporate evil with its own corporate witness;
hat thy grace through it may redeem social structures and patterns as
well as individual men and women:
ople—**Hear thou our prayer, our Father.**

nister and People—Almighty God, who alone canst rule the unruly wills
of men and bring to nought the counsels of evil, show forth again thy
udgment and mercy in our common life. Lead us thy people to see beyond
he limits of our own interests; direct us into channels of service in the
political life of our nation; cause our party leaders to put the common
good above partisan gain; and invest our elected officials with a sense
of responsibility to thee and the whole people; that the order within which
he gospel may be preached, and the justice that permits men to hear,
hall be preserved until the coming of thy Kingdom. In Jesus Christ our
Lord. Amen.

FOR TIMES OF DANGER AND DISASTER

The sentences below may be used to seek God's help for the comforting of the afflicted, the enlargement of compassion in the faithful, and their bearing of one another's burdens in fulfillment of the law of Christ.

nister—Almighty God, whose way is in the whirlwind, and who makest
torms and clouds as the dust of thy feet; who dost rebuke the sea and
nake it as the dry land; before whom the mountains quake, the hills melt,
nd the earth is laid waste:
ple—**We hearken unto thy voice, O Lord.**

nister—Who can understand the thunder of thy power, O God? But as
nou dost bind up the waters in thy clouds, and make the heavens fair with
ny wind; as thy hand doth pierce the fleeing serpent, so also art thou a

stronghold in the day of trouble, and the home of those who take refuge in thee:

***People*—We hearken unto thy voice, O Lord.**

Minister—O thou good and wise Creator, Refuge of all generations and Protector of all who trust in thee, be thou near us and all thy children in this time of peril:

***People*—Comfort all who suffer with the power of thy Spirit.**

Minister—When flood or fire, drought or whirlwind, bring loss and affliction to our own household, or likewise afflict our brothers in other lands, bind us to each other and to thee, in our common supplication and concern:

***People*—Comfort thy people, O God.**

Minister—For the American Red Cross, for public and private agencies that fight fire, guard our coasts, and maintain safety on the seas, and for all international organizations for the relief and succor of thy people:

***People*—Hear our prayer, O God.**

Minister—O Holy Spirit, lead us out of affliction into greater faith and steadfastness. Comfort those who mourn, and help us all to discern thy chastening and loving hand round about us that we may be more faithful stewards of the earth and once again rejoice in its bounties, which are thine to give or withhold:

***People*—Hear our prayer, O God.**

Minister and People—Most merciful Father, in this hour of suffering, when life's anguish links our lives with those of all thy people, we acknowledge thy majesty and mercy, and more clearly recognize our frailty before the forces of thy creation. We have need not only to stand with our brothers in the common woe, but to search with them for the way ahead, and for greater understanding of what we must do to be faithful to thee, our God and Creator. Hear us, we beseech thee, for we pray in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FOR A TIME OF INDUSTRIAL STRIFE

These sentences are intended to be used when a labor strike, or the threat of industrial disorder, occurs in a community. The litany is also appropriate for use during an industry-wide labor dispute affecting many communities across the nation.

Minister—Almighty God, who hast declared that man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his face, and hast appointed to every man his work, we thank thee for the blessing of labor whereby we are co-workers with thee:

***People*—Praise be to thee, O thou wise Creator.**

Minister—O God, who hast ordained that men shall live together as neigh-

ors, we acknowledge our dependence upon one another and our com-
non need of thee:

***ple*—Praise be to thee, O thou loving Redeemer.**

nister—O God, in this time of industrial strife, when workers and those
who employ their labors contend with one another, we pray to thee for
elp:

***ple*—Bless us and guide us, we beseech thee.**

nister—From pride and greed and prejudice, from sinful disregard of
he needs of others, from malice and dishonesty, from every evil thought
nd act which may make reconciliation difficult, we pray to thee for
orgiveness and deliverance:

***ple*—Save us and help us, we beseech thee.**

nister—Give to the workers, and to their leaders, wisdom, self-control,
atience, ability to see beyond their own desires, an awareness of their
ublic responsibility, and a determination to use peaceful and lawful
neans to achieve their just and reasonable goals, and not to resort to
iolence:

***ple*—We beseech thee to hear us, O Lord.**

nister—Give to the employers, and to their representatives, a desire
o seek the common good, to avoid rancor and animosity, to be patient
nd understanding, to trust in honest negotiation, to use the law so as
o serve and not to retard the ends of reconciliation, to deal in fairness
vith the workers and the public, whose interests are bound up with their
wn:

***ple*—We beseech thee to hear us, O Lord.**

nister—Give to the representatives of government, and to those who
re called upon for arbitration, wisdom and strength, perseverance and
esourcefulness, skill in human relations, dedication to justice and fair
lay:

***ple*—We beseech thee to hear us, O Lord.**

nister—Give to the churches of our community in this time of need
oldness to speak the truth in love, compassion to minister to all, wis-
om to proclaim the gospel in all its relevance to human events, power
o call men to repentance and reconciliation:

***ple*—We beseech thee to hear us, O Lord.**

nister and People—O God, thou Father of us all, by whose provi-
ence our labors are varied and ordered, grant to us all the spirit to seek
nd serve the common good. Save us from division, and from the tempta-
on to violence or to false accusation. Help us to confide in peaceful
neans for the settlement of our human disputes. May workers and em-
loyers, rising above greed and covetousness, come at last to seek to-
ether that which is just and equal, and to live and work in mutual re-
pect and partnership, for their own well-being and the prosperity of
ll, and to thy glory. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Who Should Read Social Progress?

Let us suggest the following persons in every local church:

- minister
- elders
- deacons
- trustees
- Christian education committee members
- social education and action subcommittee members
- church school administrative officers
- church school teachers
- officers of older youth and young adult groups
- officers and leaders of women's organizations
- officers and leaders of the men's council
- persons representing the church in community organizations and agencies

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